

Patent claims

1. A costimulating molecule
- 5 a) having the biological activity of costimulation of T cells,
 b) which occurs on activated CD4⁺ and CD8⁺ T lymphocytes but
not resting or/activated B cells, granulocytes, monocytes, NK cells or dendritic
cells, and
- 10 c) which has two polypeptide chains, the said molecule having a
molecular weight of about 55 to 60 kDa determined in a nonreducing SDS
polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis, and the two polypeptide chains of the said
molecule having a molecular weight of about 27 kDa and about 29 kDa measured
in a reducing SDS polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis.
- 15 2. A costimulating molecule having the biological activity of
costimulation of T cells comprising an amino-acid sequence which shows at least
40% homology with the sequence comprising 199 amino acids in Fig. 15 (SEQ ID
NO:2), or a biologically active fragment or an analogue thereof.
- 20 3. A costimulating molecule having the biological activity of
costimulation of T cells according to Claim 2 and comprising the amino acid
sequence shown in Fig. 15 (SEQ ID NO:2), or a biologically active fragment or an
analogue thereof.
- 25 4. A DNA sequence which encodes a costimulating molecule
according to Claim 1 or a fragment thereof.
5. A DNA sequence which encodes a costimulating molecule
according to Claim 2 or a fragment thereof.

6. A DNA sequence encoding a costimulating molecule having the biological activity of costimulation of T cells, the sequence being selected from the group consisting of:

- 5
- a) the DNA sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:1 (Fig. 16) and its complementary strand
 - b) DNA sequence hybridizing with the sequences in (a) and
 - c) DNA sequences which, because of the degeneracy of the genetic code, hybridize with the sequences in (a) and (b).

10 7. A plasmid or a viral DNA vector comprising a DNA sequence according to Claim 4.

8. A plasmid or a viral DNA vector comprising a DNA sequence according to Claim 5.

15 9. A prokaryotic or eukaryotic host cell stably transformed or transfected with a plasmid or DNA vector according to Claim 4.

20 10. A prokaryotic or eukaryotic host cell stably transformed or transfected with a plasmid or DNA vector according to Claim 5.

25 11. Method for preparing a costimulating molecule according to Claim 1, comprising the cultivation of the host cell according to Claim 9 for expression of the said molecule in the host cell.

12. Method for preparing a costimulating molecule according to Claim 1, comprising the cultivation of the host cell according to Claim 10 for expression of the said molecule in the host cell.

13. Method for preparing a costimulating molecule according to Claim 2, comprising the cultivation of the host cell according to Claim 9 for expression of the said molecule in the host cell.

5 14. Method for preparing a costimulating molecule according to Claim 2, comprising the cultivation of the host cell according to Claim 10 for expression of the said molecule in the host cell.

10 15. An antibody which binds a costimulating molecule according to Claim 1.

16. An antibody which binds a costimulating molecule according to Claim 2.

15 17. An antibody according to Claim 15, which is a monoclonal antibody.

18. An antibody according to Claim 16, which is a monoclonal antibody.

20 19. A monoclonal antibody which specifically recognizes a costimulating molecule according to Claim 1, characterized in that B cells of mice which are immunized with human T lymphocytes activated PMA and the Ca^{2+} ionophore ionomycin are fused with a myeloma cell line to give an antibody-secreting hybridoma, and the monoclonal antibodies are purified in flow
25 cytometry for 2-signal molecule-activated against resting T cells.

20. A monoclonal antibody which specifically recognizes a costimulating molecule according to Claim 2, characterized in that B cells of mice
30 which are immunized with human T lymphocytes activated PMA and the Ca^{2+} ionophore ionomycin are fused with a myeloma cell line to give an antibody-

secreting hybridoma, and the monoclonal antibodies are purified in flow cytometry for 2-signal molecule-activated against resting T cells.

21. A hybridoma cell which generates the monoclonal antibody
5 according to Claim 15.

22. A hybridoma cell which generates the monoclonal antibody
according to Claim 16.

10 23. Use of substances which inhibit the biological activity of a
costimulating molecule according to Claims 1 as pharmaceuticals.

24. Use of substances which inhibit the biological activity of a
costimulating molecule according to Claims 2 as pharmaceuticals.
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25. Use according to Claim 23, where the substances comprise a
monoclonal antibody, natural or synthetic ligands, agonists or antagonists.

26. Use according to Claim 24, where the substances comprise a
20 monoclonal antibody, natural or synthetic ligands, agonists or antagonists.

27. Use of substances which inhibit the biological activity of a
costimulating molecule according to Claim 1 for the production of a
pharmaceutical for the treatment of autoimmune diseases, for the prevention of re-
25 jection reactions in organ transplants and for the treatment of dysregulation of the
immune system.

28. Use of substances which inhibit the biological activity of a
costimulating molecule according to Claim 2 for the production of a
30 pharmaceutical for the treatment of autoimmune diseases, for the prevention of re-

jection reactions in organ transplants and for the treatment of dysregulation of the immune system.

5 29. Use of a costimulating molecule according to Claim 1 as pharmaceuticals.

30. Use of a costimulating molecule according to Claim 2 as pharmaceuticals.

10 31. Use of a costimulating molecule according to Claim 1 for the production of pharmaceuticals for the treatment of cancers, Aids, asthmatic disorders and chronic viral diseases such as HCV and HBV infections.

15 32. Use of a costimulating molecule according to Claim 2 for the production of pharmaceuticals for the treatment of cancers, Aids, asthmatic disorders and chronic viral diseases such as HCV and HBV infections.

20 33. Use of cells comprising a costimulating molecule according to Claim 1 as pharmaceuticals.

34. Use of cells comprising a costimulating molecule according to Claim 2 as pharmaceuticals.

25 35. Use of cells according to Claim 33 for the production of a pharmaceutical for the treatment of cancers, Aids, asthmatic disorders and chronic viral diseases such as HCV and HBV infections.

30 36. Use of cells according to Claim 34 for the production of a pharmaceutical for the treatment of cancers, Aids, asthmatic disorders and chronic viral diseases such as HCV and HBV infections.

37. Use of substances which specifically recognize a costimulating molecule according to Claim 1 for the diagnosis of disorders in which the immune system is involved.

5 38. Use of substances which specifically recognize a costimulating molecule according to Claim 2 for the diagnosis of disorders in which the immune system is involved.

10 39. Use according to Claim 37, where the substances comprise nucleic acid (RNA, DNA) molecules.

40. Use according to Claim 38, where the substances comprise nucleic acid (RNA, DNA) molecules.

15 41. Use according to Claim 37, where a hybridization or nucleic acid application technique (for example PCR) is used for the diagnosis.

20 42. Use according to Claim 38, where a hybridization or nucleic acid application technique (for example PCR) is used for the diagnosis.

43. Use according to Claim 37, where the substances comprise a monoclonal antibody, natural and synthetic ligands, agonists and antagonists.

25 44. Use according to Claim 38, where the substances comprise a monoclonal antibody, natural and synthetic ligands, agonists and antagonists.

30 45. Use according to Claim 37, where an ELISA detection, flow cytometry, Western blot, radioimmunoassay, nephelometry and a histochemical staining is used for the diagnosis.

46. Use according to Claim 38, where an ELISA detection, flow cytometry, Western blot, radioimmunoassay, nephelometry and a histochemical staining is used for the diagnosis.

5 47. Use of substances which have a positive or negative effect on (modulate) the signal transduction pathway of a costimulating molecule according to Claim 1 into the T cell as pharmaceuticals.

10 48. Use of substances which have a positive or negative effect on (modulate) the signal transduction pathway of a costimulating molecule according to Claim 2 into the T cell as pharmaceuticals.

15 49. Use of substances which prevent the up-regulation of a costimulating molecule according to Claim 1 on the T-cell surface as pharmaceuticals.

20 50. Use of substances which prevent the up-regulation of a costimulating molecule according to Claim 2 on the T-cell surface as pharmaceuticals.

51. Use of a costimulating molecule according to Claim 1 for producing antibodies.

25 52. Use of a costimulating molecule according to Claim 2 for producing antibodies.